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International Chiropractic Laws:

There has been a notable increase in the number of chiropractors throughout the world in the past 10 years. There are now some 69,000 chiropractors in practice but with a current chiropractic student population of 12,000 that number will significantly increase. In greater numbers, chiropractors are also looking at setting up practices in countries where there is a small number of DCs and often where chiropractic remains an unregulated health care profession. Naturally, everyone with an interest in practicing abroad needs to know the legal requirements for setting up a practice in a foreign country. This will depend on the legal status of the profession in that country. Here are the four scenarios: *(Please note all countries do require an approved resident or working visa.)*

1. Full legal recognition of the chiropractic profession.
2. No legislation protecting the D.C. title or defining the scope of practice but lawful to practice once a title or degree has been verified and the doctor sets up a lawful business.
3. No requirements other than setting up a lawful business.
4. Chiropractic is illegal and chiropractors are on their own.

Let's look at each of these scenarios more closely.

1. Fully Legal. There are currently 37 countries that have gone through a legislative process to define the scope of practice and where most protect the title "chiropractor, D.C., or its equivalent Bachelor degrees." Australia, Bahamas*, Belgium, Bolivia*, Canada, Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador*, Fiji*, Finland, France, Hong Kong, Iceland, Iran, Jamaica, Jordan*, Lebanon*, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Netherlands*, Norway, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela*, Virgin Islands-US, Zimbabwe. (*without full title protection) You can obtain a license to practice in these countries by making application, passing boards (many) and/or taking a practical exam. You will have to inquire as to the specific licensing requirements of your country of interest. [Our website has links to each country's leadership.](#)

2. Somewhat legal. The following countries have accepted the chiropractic diploma as qualification to practice chiropractic: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Uganda. However, the actual license or certificate is not necessarily for chiropractic. It is more frequently issued for a natural healer, drugless practitioner or even a physical therapist or massage therapist.

3. Not Illegal. When it is otherwise not illegal to practice and there is no official recognition of the profession, there are no laws to prevent you from practicing chiropractic. In fact, the Commonwealth countries are governed by "Common Law" which makes it legal to practice your profession. Once you meet the resident or work visa requirements, meaning that you can legally live and work in the country, all that is required is that you set up your practice by meeting all the local laws that apply to any business. There are many countries that require citizenship in order to own a clinic; therefore you could only work in another D.C.'s office.

There are disadvantages though. It is very difficult to run a regular practice. You have virtually no access to x-rays, ordering lab tests or other procedures that are under other providers' regulations. This tends to be handled by establishing a close working relationship with a local medical doctor. In countries without an active National Association it is recommended that you visit every* chiropractor in the country to discover what he or she has learned about what is or is not permitted. (*Not everybody shares the same views.)

4. Illegal (but somewhat tolerated). When it is illegal to practice chiropractic, the laws usually prevent anyone other than an M.D. to treat people. There are several countries (for example, in Eastern Europe) where MDs have become DCs and limit their practice to chiropractic. As Europe enters unprecedented economic cooperation, it will be interesting to see how antiquated medical dominated laws will crumble as new trade laws permit DCs equal access within the unified European nations. With France's new law and the recent Korean cases being negotiated to bring official recognition, hopefully the days of oppression will be over and done with.

You may be better able to make a decision about setting up a foreign practice by first learning more about yourself and about other cultures. There is a self-evaluation quiz on the Chiropractic Diplomatic Corps' website ([TOPIC #6](#)) that may be of interest. Individual personal assistance is also available for chiropractors that are getting close to making a decision to set up a foreign practice simply by [contacting](#) us by email.

France:

The surprise of the past year goes to France for "pulling a rabbit out of a hat" in getting official recognition of the chiropractic profession by the French government this past Fall. The Osteopaths were also afforded the same legality through the same piece of legislation. Undoubtedly, the arrival of hundreds of DCs at the Paris WFC Congress last May made a positive impact in support of the work underway by the local DC Association. There are now some 400 DCs in private practice throughout France and with an active National Association and a private chiropractic school the future of the profession there looks very promising indeed. "Felicitations!" ([France Information Page](#))

Italy:

The Italian Chiropractic association has also been trying to get their 1986 legislation completely ratified for years while for now they operate from a PERMIT. Hopefully, the ICA's European Conference in Rome this coming April can provide the same impact on the Italian government as was seen in France last year. If you are interested in Italy as your practice destination, you should attend this [ICA conference](#) and plan additional tours of the local regions to help you get a feel for selecting a practice location. Italy has about 200 practicing DCs with reportedly about half working for the Static Clinics distributed throughout the country. The National Association has certainly become more organized and aggressive. The association does a pretty good job of keeping up on who's looking for an associate. But if one doesn't already speak Italian... odds are not good. The critical mass is building for a decisive turn around if the local DCs can seize the moment.

Two concerns worth mentioning: One, regards a non-conventional chiropractic school outside of Bologna that was established by a Canadian two years ago to help MDs get a DC diploma by attending classes once-per-month for 3 years... another reason why official recognition is critical in properly establishing the profession. The second, refers to a group run by a non-DC called ICN that claims to be arranging work with "Conventionato" clinics that are reimbursed under the socialized system, like Static. Some DCs have given this "agency" a bad report and a few horror stories. We would like to know if anyone else has heard about these people and if there is more to add to this report. ([Italy Information Page](#))

Italy is not the only country where non-DC entrepreneurs have developed a variety of syndicates or other business opportunities where there were not always the best of intentions being realized. We ask that these entities be reported to the local chiropractic leadership as well as to the Chiropractic Diplomatic Corps since we maintain a central source of International information on what's going on. You look to us to have this kind of information available and sometimes it starts with a helpful lead from you.

Spain:

There are approximately 100 chiropractors practicing in Spain. The membership of the Asociacion Espanola de Quiropractica (AEQ) is headquartered in Madrid and enjoys the membership of 85% of chiropractors practicing in Spain. Most are ex-pats with only 25% being Spanish. This reflects an increase of over 100% in the past decade and with the greater majority active in the Association there is a natural organizational process underway. Chiropractors have been prosecuted for practicing chiropractic and it is conceivable that someone could be incarcerated for practicing chiropractic, but in light of the recent events, not likely. The 2000/2001 prosecutions of a few DCs were won in favor of the chiropractors with the last negative report that involved deporting the DC was back in 1999. Interest has recently been expressed for the establishment of a chiropractic college in the coming years. Spain is positioned somewhat where France was 15-20 years ago but the matter of official government recognition could come about in the next few years. ([Spain Information Page](#))

- **Next month's topics will touch on Economics and updates on the Commonwealth countries.**

NEWSLETTER POLICY:

This newsletter is intended to inform and encourage the International growth of Chiropractic. If you know someone who may be interested in receiving this newsletter, please have them go to <http://www.chiropracticdiplomatic.com/register> and complete the Foreign Service Registry form, their address will then be added to future mailings. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, simply notify us by replying to the delivery email.